



NSPS Newsletter

AF National Security Personnel System Office
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News Briefs

- ◆ Air Force (AF) added approximately 1200 employees to the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) roster on 18 March 2007 with the completion of the Spiral 1.3B conversion; the total number of AF employees now covered by provisions of NSPS is about 39,000. With the completion of Spiral 1.3 this spring, 113,000 Department of Defense (DoD) employees will be included in the performance-based system.
- ◆ DoD is in the early stages of planning the NSPS human resources design for Federal Wage System (FWS) employees. No decision has been made on the implementation date.
- ◆ The NSPS Program Executive Office (PEO) is also reaching out to other DoD communities to assist in designing systems similar to NSPS; for example, they are working with the intelligence community in planning a personnel system based on the NSPS model that will span all DoD components. The PEO is also exploring ways NSPS can be applied to National Guard technicians and Defense teachers.

How Do Salaries Increase?

Under NSPS, an employee's salary may be adjusted in a number of ways. An employee is eligible for a **performance-based increase** if the employee achieves a rating level of 3 (valued employee) or higher on the annual appraisal. When an employee moves to a different position *within* a pay band, the **reassignment** may lead to a salary increase up to 5%. When an employee moves to a higher pay band, the **promotion** action leads to a minimum increase in salary of 6% and may, with management approval, increase up to 20%.

Rate range refers to the span of salary between the minimum and maximum rate of the pay band. Employees who have a rating of record of 2 (fair) or higher are eligible to receive a **rate range adjustment** when there is an increase to the rate range. Employees are also eligible for a **Local Market Supplement (LMS)** adjustment to reflect changes in a specified local market area, occupation, specialization, or pay band, provided the employee has a rating of record of 2 or higher.

iSuccess

The NSPS PEO has developed and released a Web-based training course to assist employees in writing effective job objectives and self-assessments. *iSuccess* is a self-paced tool that can be used at any time to guide employees through the writing process. By employing a ‘virtual coach’ and ‘virtual employees’ to provide important tips and techniques for developing successful objectives and self-assessments, *iSuccess* helps employees

- ◆ Write effective job objectives using the SMART (specific, m measurable, aligned, r realistic/r relevant, timed) framework;
- ◆ Select appropriate contributing factors that reflect how to accomplish job objectives;
- ◆ Understand the impact of performance indicators on the development of job objectives; and
- ◆ Practice writing a self-assessment based on accomplishments and achievements in relation to objectives, performance indicators, and contributing factors

iSuccess is available on-line. Navigate to <http://www/cpms.mil/nsps>, then visit the ‘**Resources**’ area of the home page.

Job Objective Criteria

Consider the following when writing job objectives:

- ◆ Are the job objectives results-focused?
 - ◆ Do the job objectives focus on the regular and recurring areas of work the employee is responsible for accomplishing within the period of performance?
 - ◆ Is there a direct connection between the job objectives and organization’s missions and goals?
 - ◆ Are the objectives appropriate for the employee’s salary level, pay schedule and pay band?
 - ◆ Are the job objectives written in a “SMART” framework so that the supervisor and employee have a shared understanding of what is expected?
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How Are Supervisors Held Accountable for Ratings?

Before supervisors can act as NSPS rating officials, they must be trained on how to conduct their performance management responsibilities. Their effectiveness is tied to their own objectives and becomes an important factor in determining their rating and, ultimately, their pay increases.

Supervisors work with employees to develop performance expectations and offer employees the opportunity to participate in the performance plan process. This interaction allows each employee to understand more clearly what is expected of them on the job and to tailor behavior toward success. If, however, an employee feels that the performance rating received was inappropriate, that employee may ask for reconsideration. The administrative reconsideration process is available to all employees covered by NSPS.

In a memo from Lieutenant General Roger Brady dated 18 Jan 07, all supervisors, including military supervisors, were reminded that they will be held accountable for the success of the NSPS performance system:

Military supervisors are accountable as well

‘The underlying principle of NSPS is pay for performance rather than longevity. This impact on employee pay drives a requirement for accountability at all levels within the Air Force—from senior leaders to managers to supervisors to employees. Under NSPS, civilian managers and supervisors will be evaluated on how well they perform their performance management responsibilities. We will hold AF officers and enlisted members who supervise civilian employees in NSPS to the same standard. Supervisory responsibilities are already addressed on the military supervisor’s performance report and will continue to be an important performance factor.’

Accountability in NSPS Encourages Mentoring

NSPS is designed to promote a performance culture through several key concepts—communication, feedback and results. Employees will be held accountable for their performance and behavior in accomplishing their duties and supervisors will be held accountable to administer the performance system as it was designed. Performance and results will be heavily emphasized by aligning it to the organizational goals will be heavily emphasized by linking it to pay (bonuses and raises). Both supervisors and employees will be held accountable for communication and feedback to achieve the expected results. The increased communication will improve mentoring, training and development opportunities for all employees.

AF NSPS Web Site Moving

As we complete our first round of conversions, the AF Program Office is taking steps to institutionalize NSPS. One of our first efforts is to move the management of the AF NSPS web site from HQ USAF to the AF Civilian Personnel Center (AFPC) at Randolph TX. This move reflects the fact that NSPS, which now covers approximately 1/3 of all AF employees, is an integrated part of the AF corporate environment and as such should join the rest of the human resources operations, which are managed at AFPC. More information on this change will be provided as the move is finalized.

Accountability

‘NSPS is based on the principles of merit and fairness embodied in the statutory merit system principles and has unprecedented potential to greatly enhance the way the Air Force manages its civilian workforce. With the teamwork of our senior leaders, managers, supervisors, and employees, we can ensure appropriate accountability and individual and organizational success.’

Roger A. Brady
Lieutenant General, USAF
DCS, Manpower and Personnel

AF Web Site

The Air Force NSPS website is available to the public on Air Force Link.

The address is <http://www.af.mil/library/nsps-af/index.asp>.

Back Issues

To view previous editions of the NSPS Newsletter, visit the [AF NSPS website](#).

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